

CARE FOR THE CAREGIVER



Caring for someone with kidney cancer can be a demanding job, especially if they are in an advanced stage. However, as a caregiver, you can't ignore your own needs. The following tips will help you maintain your own well-being and relationships, while you're taking care of your loved one.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS

Determine what you can and cannot do.

Let family members know what help you need (cooking, cleaning, and other chores).

Don't sacrifice your relationships with friends out of fear of burdening others with your challenges.

Establish a point person or create a public blog to provide updates for those in your circle.

Be patient with others—many don't understand what caregiving entails.

If you show signs of exhaustion, anxiety, and depression and believe you need help, try these strategies:

- Get professional help by asking your doctor for a referral.
- Join a local support group or online community for kidney cancer.

KEEP UP YOUR INTERESTS AND ACTIVITIES

Social stimulation and interaction with old friends can provide a break in routine.

Take up new activities or reengage in older ones that add joy to your life:

- Play an instrument, draw, paint, run, or take a group walk.
- Read books, watch movies, or listen to music.
- Consider meditation for relaxation.

HOW TO STAY PHYSICALLY HEALTHY

Take breaks from caregiving when you can.

Make sure to eat when you're hungry, and drink plenty of water throughout the day.

Aim to sleep seven to nine hours per night.

Find time for your own health appointments.

Carve out time every day to relax.

Make time to exercise—at a local gym or in your home:

- Try bodyweight-based exercise.
- Practice yoga or tai chi, which not only help keep your body in shape, but also serve as effective stress-management tools.

CARING FOR YOUR CHILDREN WHILE CAREGIVING

Being a caregiver for a loved one with kidney cancer and a parent is like working two full-time jobs. Caregivers with children will have to adopt strategies to help manage their time and energy.

These tips can help you manage the difficulties of being a caregiver with children.

- Children who are close to and depend on caregivers will notice and react to shifting attention. Especially when time is very limited, it is important to have open communication with your children so they can express themselves in healthy ways.
- Don't be afraid to reach out to friends and other people in the community who know and are close with your children. You may be surprised by how much people want to help during hard times.

Sources: Cancer.org

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